



Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
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# Mary V. Quirk School

WARREN

## THE SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

April 1, 2005



### **School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT)**

**The school accountability program of the Rhode Island Department of Education**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## The Purpose and Limits of This Report

This is the report of the SALT team that visited Mary V. Quirk School from March 28-April 1, 2005.

The SALT visit report makes every effort to provide your school with a valid, specific picture of how well your students are learning. The report also portrays how the teaching in your school affects learning, and how the school supports learning and teaching. The purpose of developing this information is to help you make changes in teaching and the school that will improve the learning of your students. The report is valid because the team's inquiry is governed by a protocol that is carefully designed to make it possible for visit team members to make careful judgments using accurate evidence. The careful exercise of professional judgment makes the findings useful for school improvement because these judgments identify where the visit team thinks the school is doing well, and where it is doing less well.

The major questions the team addressed were:

- ◆ *How well do students learn at Mary V. Quirk School?*
- ◆ *How well does the teaching at Mary V. Quirk School affect learning?*
- ◆ *How well does Mary V. Quirk School support learning and teaching?*

The following features of this visit are at the heart of the report:

Members of the visit team are primarily teachers and administrators from Rhode Island public schools. The majority of team members are teachers. The names and affiliations of the team members are listed at the end of the report.

*The team sought to capture what makes this school work, or not work, as a public institution of learning. Each school is unique and the team has tried to capture what makes Mary V. Quirk School distinct.*

*The team did not compare this school to any other school.*

*When writing the report, the team deliberately chose words that it thought would best convey its message to the school, based on careful consideration of what it had learned about the school.*

**The team reached consensus on each conclusion, each recommendation, and each commendation in this report.**

The team made its judgment explicit.

This report reflects only the week in the life of the school that was observed and considered by this team. The report is not based on what the school plans to do in the future or on what it has done in the past.

This school visit is supported by the Rhode Island Department of Education as a component of School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT). To gain the full advantages of a peer visiting system, RIDE deliberately did not participate in the active editing of this SALT visit report. That was carried out by the team's Chair with the support of Catalpa. Ltd.

The team closely followed a rigorous protocol of inquiry that is rooted in Practice-based Inquiry™ (Catalpa Ltd). The detailed *Handbook for Chairs of the SALT School Visit, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* describes the theoretical constructs behind the SALT visit and stipulates the many details of the visit procedures. The *Handbook* and other relevant documents are available at [www.Catalpa.org](http://www.Catalpa.org). Contact Rick Richards at (401) 222-4600 x 2194 or [ride0782@ride.ri.net](mailto:ride0782@ride.ri.net) for further information about the SALT visit protocol.

SALT visits undergo rigorous quality control. Catalpa Ltd. monitors each visit and determines whether the report can be endorsed. Endorsement assures the reader that the team and the school followed the visit protocol. It also assures that the conclusions and the report meet specified standards.

## Sources of Evidence

The Sources of Evidence that this team used to support its conclusions are listed in the appendix.

The team spent a total of over 130 hours in direct classroom observation. Most of this time was spent in observing complete lessons or classes. Almost every classroom was visited at least once, and almost every teacher was observed more than once. Team members had conversations with various teachers and staff for a total of 27 hours.

The full visit team built the conclusions, commendations, and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussion. The team met for a total of 27 hours in team meetings spanning the five days of the visit. This time does not include the time the team spent in classrooms, with teachers, and in meetings with students, parents, and school and district administrators.

The team did agree by consensus that every conclusion in this report is:

- ◆ *Important enough to include in the report*
- ◆ *Supported by the evidence the team gathered during the visit*
- ◆ *Set in the present, and*
- ◆ *Contains the judgment of the team*

## Using the Report

This report is designed to have value to all audiences concerned with how Mary V. Quirk School can improve student learning. However, the most important audience is the school itself.

How your school improvement team reads and considers the report is the critical first step. RIDE will provide a SALT Fellow to lead a follow-up session with the school improvement team to help start the process. With support from the Bristol-Warren Regional School District School Improvement Coordinator and from SALT fellows, the school improvement team should carefully decide what changes it wants to make in learning, teaching, and the school, and amend its School Improvement Plan to reflect these decisions.

The Bristol-Warren Regional School District, RIDE and the public should consider what the report says or implies about how they can best support Mary V. Quirk School as it works to strengthen its performance.

Any reader of this report should consider the report as a whole. A reader who only looks at recommendations misses important information.

## **2. PROFILE OF MARY V. QUIRK SCHOOL**

Mary V. Quirk School, located in Warren, Rhode Island, serves students in fourth and fifth grade. The school originally opened in 1927 as Warren High School. The facility then housed a middle school and the district executive offices before reopening, after significant renovations, in September 2000 as an elementary school.

Of the 160 students in attendance, 90% are white, eight percent are African American, one percent is Hispanic, and one percent is Native American. Forty two percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced price lunch. Six percent of students receive English as a Second Language education, 14% receive Title I services, and three percent receive speech and language services. Nine percent of the students receive special education services.

A professional staff of one principal, four fourth grade teachers, four fifth grade teachers, two special educators, one part-time music teacher, two part-time librarians, one part-time physical educator, and one part-time art instructor service students. A title I Reading Specialist, one part-time ESL teacher, one part-time speech teacher, one part-time psychologist, one part-time social worker, one part-time diagnostic prescriptive therapist, and one part-time math tutor also assist students. The staff also includes four paraprofessionals, one part-time nurse, one secretary, and two custodians.

Teachers at Mary V. Quirk participate in the Focus School program sponsored by the East Bay Collaborative. They also use Everyday Math, Exemplars, and Kits in Teaching Elementary Science (KITES) in their classrooms. In addition, six classrooms are piloting three different commercial reading series. A district literacy coach and numeracy coach, who assist the teachers in learning and implementing the district's curriculum plan, assist the faculty. All classrooms have a direct connection to the Internet on one or more classroom computers, and the library has a nine-computer workstation.

The Mary V. Quirk School community participates in a variety of school programs and initiatives, including Family Fitness Night, Talent Show, Young Authors Night, Math Science Geography Night (MSG), Starbase Atlantis, and the Feinstein Food Drive. Further, Quirk School also collaborates with pre-service teachers from Roger Williams University, Rhode Island College, and Salve Regina University. Additionally, M. V. Quirk has a successful Reporters Club, whose articles are published weekly in the Warren Times.

### **3. PORTRAIT OF MARY V. QUIRK SCHOOL AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT**

Mary V. Quirk Elementary School is a multi-level brick building located in historic downtown Warren, Rhode Island. Upon entering the school, one immediately notices the gleaming hardwood floors. A warm, friendly staff greets visitors. Student work, colorful bulletin boards, standards, and rubrics decorate classroom walls. Students and parents alike describe Quirk as a place where “everyone wears a smile” and is welcomed. There is a sense of family here.

The students at Quirk enjoy learning and coming to school each day. They immerse themselves in reading, and their conversations and responses to text show their deeper understanding and interpretation of their reading. Students problem solve well. They are developing the skills they need to become strong writers, but they write mainly to fulfill their teacher’s expectations. Many students feel they could be challenged more at school.

The entire staff at Quirk works hard and shows dedication to their students. The teachers and support staff are a tight knit family of educators. They wear many hats and do so willingly. The principal is an immense support to parents, staff, and students. When in need, parents simply pick up the phone and “call the Doctor.” Students and teachers appreciate her supportive and caring leadership style.

MV Quirk takes pride in its high performing and improving designation, and it continues to strive to improve. The school’s collaborative approach to special education serves these students well. While the school climate is welcoming and nurturing, the school needs a more consistent school-wide discipline policy.



## 4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

### Conclusions

Students at Mary V. Quirk School are developing the skills of good writers. They understand the major purpose of their writing is to persuade, inform, or entertain. Students know how to organize their writing using graphic organizers, choose “powerful” and “juicy” words to add interest to their writing, and include relevant and useful detail. The vast majority of students’ written work, however, reads like a laundry list of related facts. These pieces too often lack an interesting opening sentence, rarely expand the included facts, and often fail to incorporate student expression or originality. Student writing is noticeably better when students chose their own writing topics. This writing often includes the student’s own voice, a lead that hooks the reader, and suspense. Students report that they would enjoy writing more and would be better writers if they could more often choose what they write about and which pieces they would like to publish. While students gather ideas during their prewriting activities, the vast majority struggles to transform this information into polished written pieces. Further, far too many students do not firmly grasp common writing conventions. Additionally, many students focus on the length and content of their written pieces, as opposed to the quality of their writing. Students at Quirk write to meet their teachers’ expectations, but rarely go beyond them. They evaluate the quality of their own work by how well it meets the criteria their teachers have outlined. Although 88% of students achieved the standard or achieved the standard with honors on the 2004 New Standards Reference Examination writing effectiveness subtest, their classroom writing seldom reaches such high standards. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing school improvement plan, meeting with school improvement team, 2004 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries)*

Students at Mary V. Quirk solve problems very well. They successfully and strategically solve rigorous, multi-step problems that require them to apply mathematical skills and concepts. Students say they enjoy solving problems. These students resourcefully access the tools they need, independently utilizing posters, manipulatives, and folders of their previous work as they proceed with their activities. Students readily employ various strategies such as drawing a picture, graphing, using given information to determine unknown data, and checking the reasonableness of their answers. They write clear basic explanations using appropriate mathematical language and can tell why they solve problems the way they do. Their understanding of “accountable talk” shows in these explanations when they justify their solutions through such statements as “I noticed,” “I need to,” “I know,” and “I will.” It is not surprising that students have made such significant gains on the Problem Solving subtest of the New Standards Reference Examination. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with students and parents, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, talking with students, teachers, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing school improvement plan, classroom textbooks, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries)*

Mary V. Quirk students are avid, excellent readers. Students say that reading is their favorite part of the day and that they love to read! This is especially true of their independent reading, and they display a marked preference for fictional text. Students know how to use a variety of skills and strategies, not only to comprehend text but also to analyze and interpret what they read. They make reasonable predictions when previewing text, ask pertinent questions to set a purpose for their reading, and take picture walks to familiarize themselves with the story. While reading, they know how to use sticky notes effectively to highlight important components such as setting. Students independently build on their prior knowledge to connect their reading to their lives, other books they've read, and events in the world. They accurately explain what an inference is and know how to infer from the text they read. Quirk students use these abilities to have meaningful, in-depth discussions about their reading with other students and adults. They respond to and build upon the contributions of others, identify themes in their reading, and effectively utilize textual evidence to support their assertions about their reading. Students carry these abilities into other areas of their learning, such as creating and analyzing artwork. Parents report that their children read beyond their expected twenty minutes nightly, and that is clearly shown on the "books read" charts that hang in their classrooms. Special needs students are particularly well served when they read with a partner, listen to read alouds while following along in their own text, and discuss their reading in peer groups. These findings are reflected in the 2004 New Standards Reference Examination scores. Eighty-two percent of students achieved the standard or achieved the standard with honors on the basic understanding subtest, while 72% did so on the analysis and interpretation subtest. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with students, school administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing school improvement plan, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries)*

MV Quirk students enjoy coming to school. They report that they like their teachers, have many friends, and wish they had more science. They show interest in their learning and actively work toward meeting their teachers' expectations. Too many students, however, are not challenged by these expectations. They display an ability and willingness to play a more active role in their learning. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with students, parents, and district administrators, talking with students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers)*

### **Important Thematic Findings in Student Learning**

Students:

- ◆ *Read and write across the curriculum*
- ◆ *Understand and utilize strategies to read and problem solve effectively*
- ◆ *Strive to meet teacher expectations, but rarely go beyond*
- ◆ *Show marked improvement on their test scores in reading, writing, and problem solving*
- ◆ *Desire additional learning choices and challenges*
- ◆ *Effectively utilize accountable talk in their discussions and explanations*

## 5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING FOR LEARNING

### Conclusions

Teachers at MV Quirk are working hard to implement the components of a Writer's Workshop, with varied success. They do instruct some components of quality writing such as hooks, strong and varied word choice, and organization. The expectations of most teachers for student writing, however, focus on quantity, factual content, and appearance, as opposed to quality. Criteria sheets and rubrics reflect this emphasis. They are written in vague, general terms, and students have difficulty using them to improve their work. Teachers assign most writing tasks, and they rarely encourage their students to provide in-depth thoughts or their own creativity. Not enough teachers model the thinking and process of quality writing for their students. Feedback to students rarely provides substantive information about how to make the writing better. As a result of these practices, many teachers limit the ability of students to grow as writers. *(following students, observing classes, reviewing records of professional development activities, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing school improvement plan, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing district and school policies and practices, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, 2004 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results, meeting with school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, talking with students and teachers)*

In contrast to the preceding conclusion, Quirk teachers are exemplary instructors of problem solving. They approach instruction in an organized fashion: they build upon students' earlier knowledge to move them forward, and connect problems to the skills and concepts that students learned in the Everyday Math program. Teachers provide necessary problem solving tools such as posters, folders, and examples, and they teach their students how to use them. They explicitly instruct problem-solving strategies such as making organized lists, drawing pictures, and using manipulatives. In fact, students say that problem solving is easy because they solve problems often and their teachers show them how to solve similar problems. Teachers establish common and consistent vocabulary and regularly use mathematical language in their classrooms. This language manifests itself in students' written and verbal explanations of their solutions to problems. Hence, students are learning the skills they need to solve problems effectively. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with students and parents, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing school improvement plan, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing district and school policies and practices, classroom textbooks)*

Additionally, Quirk teachers effectively instruct reading by tailoring their instruction to meet individual students' needs. They explicitly and expertly instruct multiple strategies to help all students successfully comprehend and interpret text. Teachers continuously monitor their students' progress through conferences, "books read" charts, and running records, and they use this information to decide each student's next steps. Each teacher actively utilizes the extensive classroom libraries and guided reading books to provide appropriate independent reading material to their students. They use small groups, determined by the students' interest and ability, to provide students time for practice and individual attention. Large group instruction occurs through read alouds, during which teachers model and encourage "accountable talk." Their questioning techniques help students deepen their understanding of text and facilitate meaningful discussion. Teachers foster a love of reading in their students by providing quality literature selections and by showing their own enthusiasm for reading during read alouds. Consequently, Quirk students are excellent readers. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, reviewing school improvement plan, discussing student work with teachers, 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, reviewing records of professional development activities, reviewing district and school policies and practices)*

These dedicated teachers and paraprofessionals willingly "wear many hats" and go above and beyond their iterated responsibilities. Full of energy, they give freely of their time and work cooperatively. They keep "their children" foremost in mind. These faculty members are lifelong learners who actively pursue and utilize professional development to improve their practice. They continue to pursue and implement current educational practices in their classrooms, to the benefit of their students. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, and teachers, reviewing records of professional development activities)*

**Commendations for Mary V. Quirk School**

Excellent reading and problem solving instruction

Dedicated staff committed to lifelong learning

Pervasive and consistent school-wide use of “accountable talk”

**Recommendations for Mary V. Quirk School**

Continue to pursue quality, school-wide professional development in effective writing instruction.

Incorporate student-friendly language in rubrics and criteria. Revise rubrics to emphasize the elements of quality writing.

Model the thinking and process of quality writing for students. Provide substantive feedback to students about their writing to help them improve the quality of their writing.

Expose students to a greater variety of genres in writing and reading. Link reading to writing by pointing out quality aspects of writing in the books students read.

Provide additional student choice of writing topics.

Continue to instruct problem-solving strategies explicitly.

Move students beyond basic problem solving explanations to include making clear connections to real-world applications and using multiple strategies to solve the same problem.

Challenge all students to reach higher expectations.

Continue to keep your students foremost in mind.

**Recommendations for Bristol-Warren Regional School District**

Provide quality, school-wide professional development in effective writing instruction.

## 6. FINDINGS ON SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

### Conclusions

The principal of Quirk is an effective leader. She sets the tone for the school with her calm and caring demeanor. She has a genuine concern for the well being of her students, the parents and her staff, going so far as to visit bus stops to check on students when there are safety concerns. Parents report that she is accessible. When they have a concern or need, they simply pick up the phone and “call the Doctor.” Teachers praise her resourcefulness; if there’s anything they need, she gets it for them without question. The principal has been creative in providing an extensive and organized guided reading library that overflows into the teachers’ lounge. Students say she makes them feel safe at school and listens to what they have to say. District administrators call her an “A+ solution finder,” who gets the best out of her staff. Most importantly, she cultivates the strengths of her staff and empowers them to use these assets for the benefit of students. She helps create a learning environment where students are happy and excited about learning. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, parents, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, reviewing records of professional development activities, 2004 SALT Survey report, 2004 Information Works!)*

The clean, warm, welcoming environment of Quirk is conducive to student learning. Throughout the school, well established daily routines, which students follow, foster learning. All staff are invested, first and foremost, in the learning of students. Specialists and paraprofessionals often give up their preparation time to provide additional enrichment opportunities, such as power-point lessons, and support for students. The school works hard to involve parents by providing workshops about the school’s math program and report cards. Further, they address family life and leisure through author’s night, portfolio parties, and family dances. A feeling of camaraderie permeates the school community. Teachers work together to plan units of study. They regularly assist one another and provide guidance and support to substitute teachers. The school staff is a community of lifelong learners that focuses on helping their students learn how to learn. In an attempt to provide a nurturing environment, however, many disruptive behaviors are addressed ineffectively or not at all. Classroom management in some classes requires attention. In these classrooms, constant disruptions by students who are “repeat offenders” deprive every student of valuable learning time. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, and parents, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, reviewing school improvement plan, reviewing district and school policies and practices, 2004 Information Works!, reviewing records of professional development activities)*

The school incorporates a collaborative approach to special education that serves as a model for the district. Each collaborative classroom benefits from a regular educator, a special educator, and a full-time assistant. A variety of additional support personnel, such as ESL teachers and math coaches, also assist with instruction. In these classrooms, every child, not only the designated “special education” students, benefits from the expertise in the room. Fluid, expert co-teaching allows the teachers to plan in-depth lessons that meet the needs of each child in the room. Special education students in these classrooms say they like working in groups because their friends help them understand their assignments. The classrooms provides new meaning to the term “differentiating instruction.” The teachers expertly highlight and draw on the strengths of special needs students and hold high expectations for every student. Accepting the differences of one another, these students are building a classroom of mutual respect and trust. Special education at Quirk optimizes the learning of all students. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, and school administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing district and school policies and practices)*

The School Improvement Plan in place is a guiding force for change at Quirk. This ambitious plan is well written and detailed, but it is too long to provide a clear focus for teachers. Many of the action steps, however, are clearly evident in every classroom. Further, the team composition of teachers, leaders, and community members represents the school community well. Consequently, the school moves forward to improve student learning. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, parents, and school and district administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing school improvement plan, 2004 Information Works!)*

**Commendations for Mary V. Quirk School**

Strong and accessible school leadership

Close-knit community of lifelong learners focused on student learning

Collaborative and effective special education model

Clear, well-written school improvement plan implemented within every classroom

**Recommendations for Mary V. Quirk School**

Pursue and attend quality school-wide professional development in the area of classroom management. Develop and implement a clear and consistent school-wide discipline policy.

Continue the work to involve parents in the school community.

Continue the effective work and collaboration of the special education program.

Consider narrowing the school improvement plan to address the most pressing needs of the school.

**Recommendations for Bristol-Warren Regional School District**

Continue to fund and implement the special education model that is in place.

Provide quality school-wide professional development in the area of classroom management.



## **7. FINAL ADVICE TO MARY V. QUIRK SCHOOL**

Mary V. Quirk is truly a unified and professional learning community. Each staff member actively strives to make Quirk a better place. This school has created a welcoming and nurturing environment where students are happy to learn.

Your outstanding instruction helps students learn to solve and explain rigorous multi-step problems. Your students are excellent strategic readers, who display a true love of reading. Build upon this strength to improve their writing, and work hard to teach your students the art and craft of quality writing.

The professional development and resources provided by the district and the school enable the staff to grow as learners. This benefits the students, who are the recipients of these ever changing best practices. Manage your classroom environments so they are conducive to maximizing student-learning time.

You should be proud of your accomplishments, your consistency in implementing educational initiatives such as in reading and math, and your dedicated, seasoned professional staff. Continue your endeavors, making yourselves and your students lifelong learners. You are a community of hardworking individuals who respect and admire a thoughtful leader. Keep supporting and guiding one another as you take on the findings of this report.

## ENDORSEMENT OF SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

### Mary V. Quirk School

April 1, 2005

Catalpa Ltd. monitors all SALT visits and examines each SALT visit team report to determine whether it should be endorsed as a legitimate SALT report. The endorsement decision is based on procedures and criteria specified in *Endorsing SALT Visit Team Reports*. (available on Catalpa website). Catalpa Ltd. bases its judgment about the legitimacy of a report on these three questions:

Did the SALT visit team and the host school conduct the visit in a manner that is reasonably consistent with the protocol for the visit?

Do the conclusions of the report meet the tests for conclusions specified in the visit protocol (important, accurate, set in present, shows the team's judgment)?

Does the report meet the tests for a report as specified in the visit protocol (fair, useful, and persuasive of productive action)?

Using the answers to these questions, the final decision to endorse the report answers the overall endorsement question: Is this a legitimate SALT team visit report? In order to make this determination, Catalpa weighs all the questions and issues that have been raised to decide whether a report is legitimate or not. While it is possible that a challenge related to one of the three questions listed above would be serious enough to withhold or condition the endorsement, it is more likely that issues serious enough to challenge a report's legitimacy will cut across the three questions.

While the SALT visit protocol requires that all SALT visits are conducted to an exceptionally high standard of rigor, visits are "real-life" events; it is impossible to control for all unexpected circumstances that might arise. The protocol for the conduct of the visit is spelled out in the *Handbook for SALT Visit Chairs*, 1<sup>st</sup> edition.

Since unexpected circumstances might result in either the team or the school straying too far from the protocol for a visit, Catalpa monitors both the school and the team during a visit regarding the conduct of the visit.

Most often actual visit events or issues do not challenge a report's legitimacy and Catalpa's monitoring and endorsement is routine. A district administrator, principal, faculty member or parent may not like a report, or think it is too negative, or think the visit should have been conducted in a manner that is not consistent with the protocol. None of these represent a challenge to a report's legitimacy; concerns that might challenge an endorsement are based on events that stray too far from the protocol.

The Catalpa review of this visit and this report was routine.

The steps Catalpa completed for this review were:

- discussion with the chair about any issues related to the visit before it began
- daily discussion of any issues with the visit chair during the visit
- observation of a portion of the visit
- discussion with the principal regarding any concerns about the visit at the time of the visit
- thorough review of the report in both its pre-release and final version form

The findings from the review are:

1. This team was certified to meet team membership requirements by RIDE staff.
2. This report was produced by a legitimate SALT Visit that was led by a trained SALT Visit Chair and conducted in a manner that is consistent with SALT Visit procedures.
3. The conclusions are legitimate SALT visit conclusions.
4. The report is a legitimate SALT visit report.

Accordingly, Catalpa Ltd. endorses this report.



**CATALPA LTD.**

Thomas A. Wilson, EdD

Catalpa Ltd.

April 28, 2005

## REPORT APPENDIX

### Sources of Evidence for This Report

In order to write this report the team examined test scores, student work, and other documents related to this school. The school improvement plan for Mary V. Quirk School was the touchstone document for the team. No matter how informative documents may be, however, there is no substitute for being at the school while it is in session—in the classrooms, in the lunchroom, and in the hallways. The team built its conclusions primarily from information about what the students, staff, and administrators think and do during their day. Thus, this visit allowed the team to build informed judgments about the teaching, learning, and support that actually takes place at Mary V. Quirk School.

The visit team collected its evidence from the following sources of evidence:

- ◆ *direct classroom observation*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *following 7 students for a full day*
- ◆ *observing the work of teachers and staff for a full day*
- ◆ *meeting at scheduled times with the following groups:*
  - teachers*
  - school improvement team*
  - school and district administrators*
  - students*
  - parents*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *interviewing teachers about the work of their students*
- ◆ *analyzing state assessment results as reported in Information Works!*
- ◆ *reviewing the following documents:*
  - district and school policies and practices*
  - records of professional development activities*
  - classroom assessments*
  - school improvement plan for Mary V. Quirk School*
  - Bristol Warren Regional School District Strategic Plan 2001-2006*
  - 2004 SALT Survey report*
  - classroom textbooks*
  - 2003 Information Works!*
  - 2004 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries*
  - School and District Report Cards*
  - Bristol Warren Regional School District Fiscal Year 2004-2005 Budget*

*Request**Bristol Warren Regional School District Grade 4 Templates and Grade Level Expectations Binder**Bristol Warren Regional School District Grade 5 Templates and Grade Level Expectations Binder**Improving Student Behavior Program Binder**Rituals, Routines, and Artifacts: Classroom Management and Writer's Workshop Binder**Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Regulations Chapter 16-54**WIDA Consortium English Language Proficiency Standards for English Language Learners in Kindergarten through Grade 12: Frameworks for Large-Scale State and Classroom Assessment Overview Document**Starbase Atlantis Folder**Warren Times Gazette MVQ Reporters Binder**Bristol Warren Regional School District English As A Second Language Handbook 1998-1999 Revised 1999-2000**Mary V. Quirk School Grades 4 and 5 Writing Benchmarks 2004-2005 Language Arts & Mathematics Assessments Interventions, Criteria & Rubrics Binder**Bristol Warren Regional School District Elementary Digital Portfolio Binder**Cultural Diversity 2002-2003 Binder**Mary V. Quirk School SALT Committee Documents Binder**Agreement R.I. Council 94 AFSCME, AFL CIO Local 581 and The Bristol Warren Regional School Committee July 1 2003 – June 30, 2006**Agreement Between the Bristol Warren Regional School Committee and the Bristol Warren Education Association Contract Years 2002-03, 2003-04, 2004-05***State Assessment Results for Mary V. Quirk School**

Assessment results create pieces of evidence that the visit team uses as it conducts its inquiry. The team uses this evidence to shape its efforts to locate critical issues for the school. It also uses this evidence, along with other evidence, to draw conclusions about those issues.

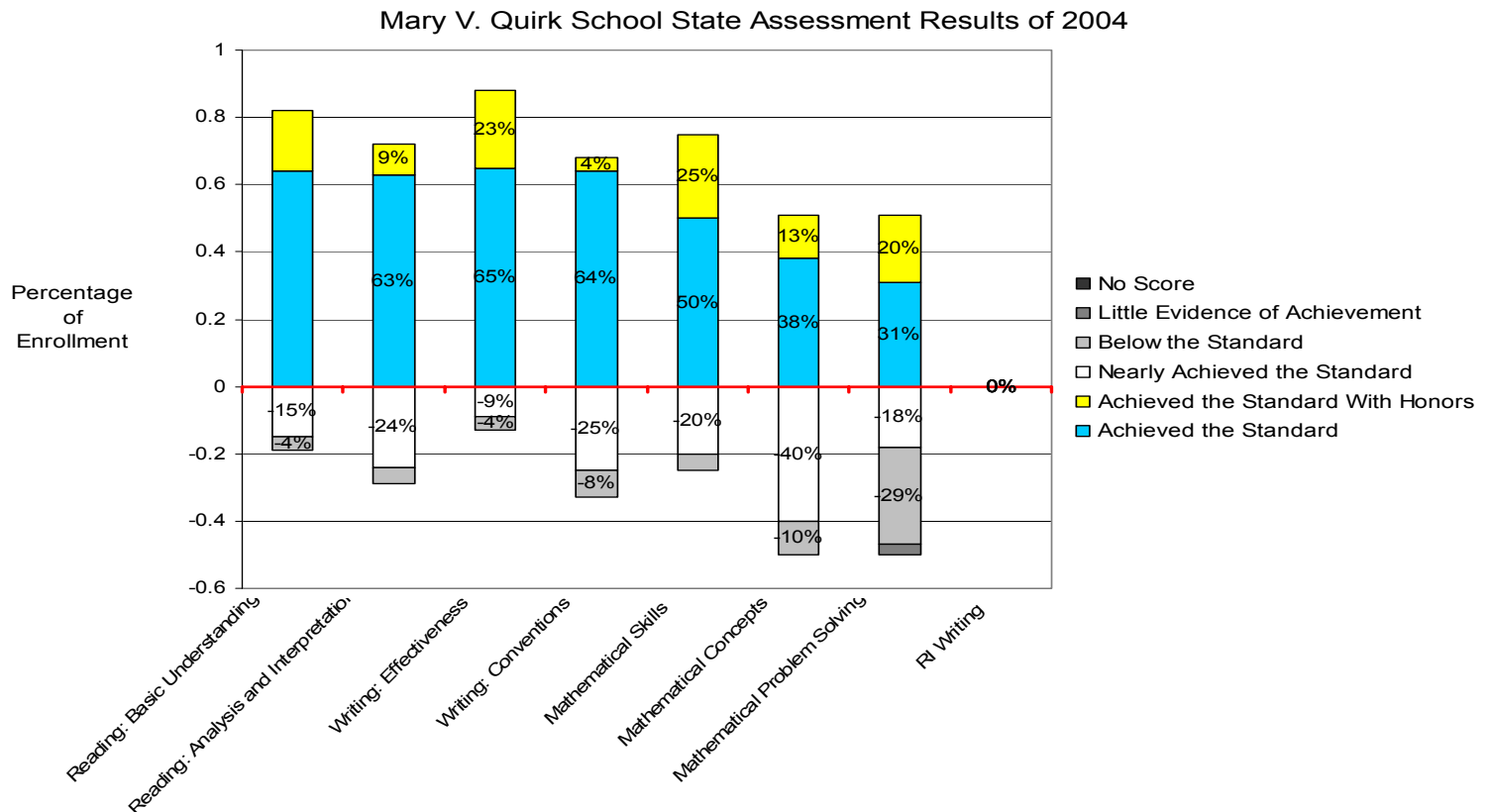
This school's results are from the latest available state assessment information. It is presented here in four different ways:

- ◆ *against performance standards;*
- ◆ *across student groups within the school;*
- ◆ *and over time.*

## RESULTS IN RELATION TO PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The first display shows how well the students do in relation to standards in English/Language Arts and mathematics. Student results are shown as the percentage of students taking the test whose score places them in the various categories at, above, or below the performance standard. Endorsed by the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education in 1998, the tested standards can be found in the publication *New Standards Performance Standards*.

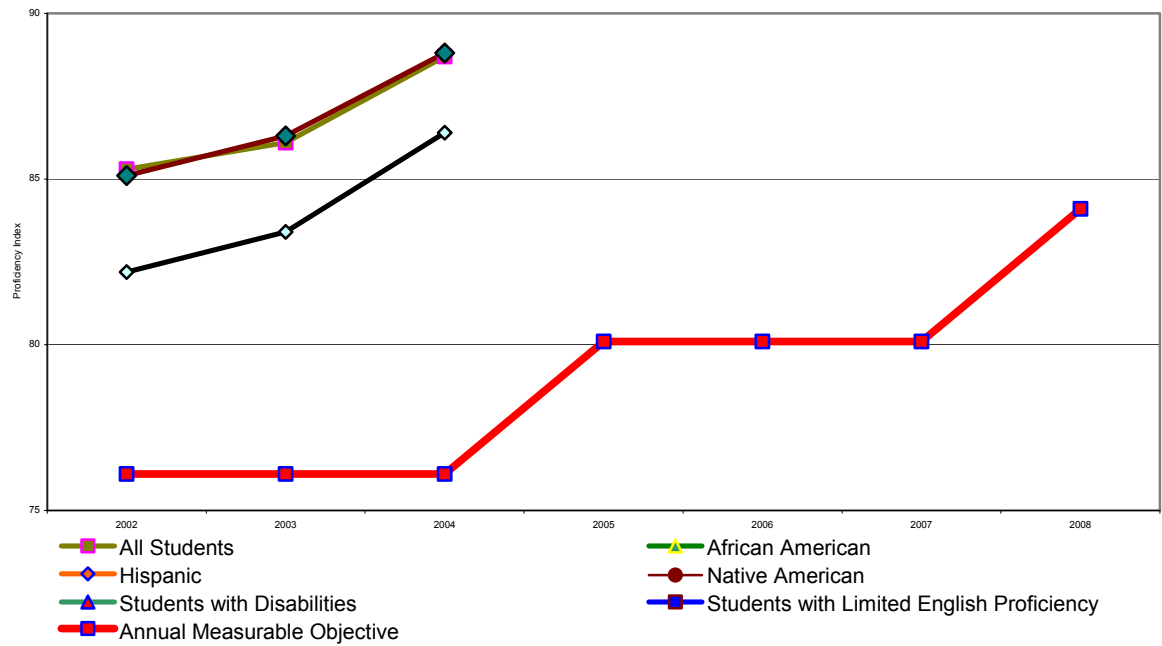
**Table1. 2003-04 Student Results on Rhode Island State Assessments**



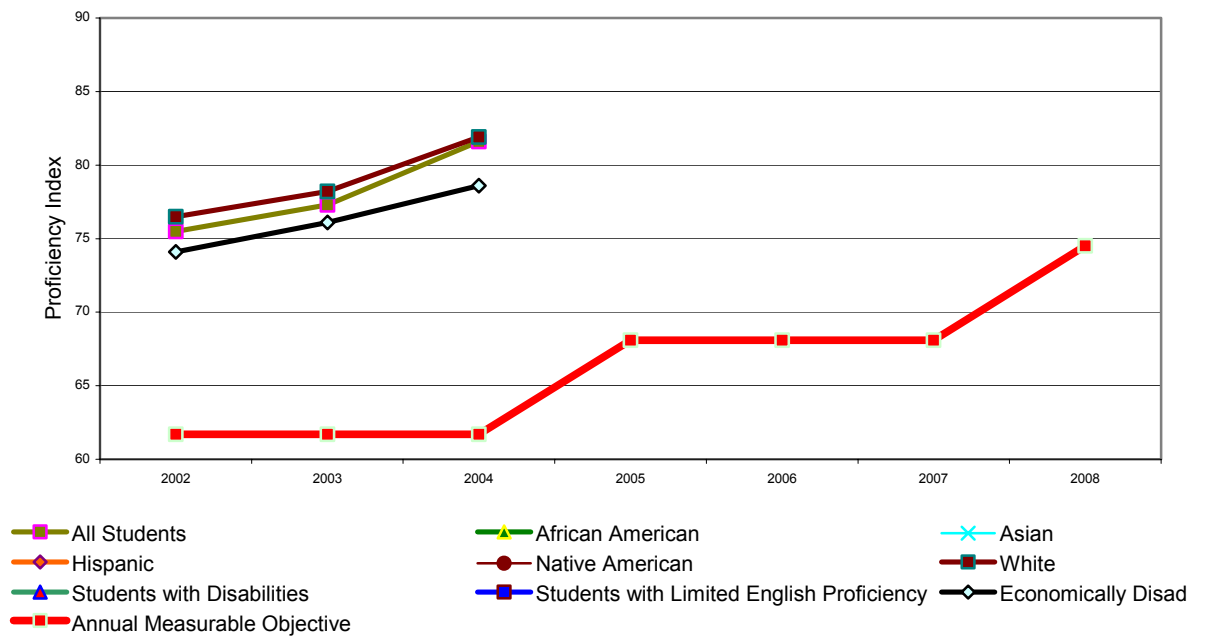
An important way to display student results is across different groups of students with different characteristics who are in the school. This display showing targets and index scores, in accordance with the No Child Left Behind federal legislation creates information about how well the school meets the learning needs of its various students. Since breaking students into these smaller groups can result in groups becoming too small to show accurate results, this display shows the results based on three years of testing. Any student group whose index scores do not meet the targets set by RIDE require additional attention to close its performance gap.

**Table 2. 2002-2004 Student Results across Subgroups**

Annual Proficiency, Mary V. Quirk School, ELA, Gr. 4



Annual Proficiency, Mary V. Quirk School, Gr. 4 Math



## REPORT CARD FOR MARY V. QUIRK SCHOOL

This Report Card show the performance of Mary V. Quirk School compared to the school's annual measurable objectives (AMO).

These report card scores describe Mary V. Quirk School as a school in need of improvement, making insufficient progress.

*Table 3. Report Card for Mary V. Quirk School*

## 2004 Rhode Island School Report Card

RI SCHOOL: **MARY V. QUIRK SCHOOL**

RI DISTRICT: **BRISTOL WARREN**

GRADE: **04**

INDEX PROFICIENCY SCORE, 2002-04	ENGLISH LANG. ARTS <b>TARGET SCORE:</b>				MATHEMATICS <b>TARGET SCORE: 61.7</b>			
	<b>76.1</b>							
STUDENT GROUP	THIS SCHOOL	TARGET MET?	THIS DISTRICT	THE STATE	THIS SCHOOL	TARGET MET?	THIS DISTRICT	THE STATE
All Students	88.7	YES	89.1	86.1	81.6	YES	79	77.5
African Americans	*	YES	*	77.8	*	YES	*	65.9
Asian	*	YES	*	84.5	*	YES	*	77.1
Hispanic	*	YES	*	75.8	*	YES	*	65.8
Native Americans	*	YES	*	83.9	*	YES	*	73
White	88.8	YES	85.7	88.5	81.9	YES	80.6	82
Students with Disabilities	*	YES	68.8	69.5	*	YES	63.7	66.4
Students with Limited English Proficiency	*	YES	80.9	68.9	*	YES	64.9	61
Students who are Economically Disadvantaged	86.4	YES	81.8	77.8	78.6	YES	74.2	68.4

PERCENT OF STUDENTS TESTED, 2002-04	<b>Target: 95%</b>			
	THIS SCHOOL	TARGET MET?	THIS DISTRICT	THE STATE
English Language Arts	100	YES	99.6	99.1
Mathematics	100	YES	99	99.4
ATTENDAN CE RATE	<b>Target: 90%</b>			
	THIS SCHOOL	TARGET MET?	THIS DISTRICT	THE STATE



	93.8	YES	94.9	94.8
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**TARGETS MET/MISSED, THIS SCHOOL**

	TARGETS MET	TARGETS MISSED
English Language Arts Index Score	9	0
Mathematics Index Score	9	0
Percent Tested	2	0
Attendance Rate	1	0

**THIS SCHOOL IS CLASSIFIED AS:**

**High Performing and Improving**

Information Works! data for Mary V. Quirk School is available at <http://www.ridoe.net>.

**THE MARY V. QUIRK SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM**

Helen Albernaz, Retired Teacher

Dr. Annotti, Principal

Bill Barlow, Parent

Barbara Betres, MV Quirk Teacher

Jim Betres, Community Representative

Judith Colaluca, MV Quirk Teacher

Martha Genovesi, MV Quirk Teacher

Mary Fran Perella, Retired Teacher, Community Member

John Raposa, Retired Teacher

Dan Richards, Community Member

Deb Whitmore, Parent

**MEMBERS OF THE SALT VISIT TEAM**

Catherine E. C. Hutz  
English Teacher  
North Smithfield Junior-Senior High School  
on leave to the  
Office of School Improvement and Support Services  
Rhode Island Department of Education  
Regents SALT Fellow  
Team Chair

Thomas Gastall  
Principal  
Ranger School  
Tiverton, Rhode Island

Jenny Gaynor  
Grade 5 Teacher  
Hampden Meadows School  
Barrington, Rhode Island

Paula Johnson  
Inclusion Special Educator, Grades 4 and 5  
John J. McLaughlin Cumberland Hill School  
Cumberland, Rhode Island

Trisha McBride  
Special Educator, Grade 3  
Henry J. Winters School  
Pawtucket, Rhode Island

Jeannine Magliocco  
Grade 4 Teacher  
Aquidneck School  
Middletown, Rhode Island

Gretchen Pantig  
Reading Specialist  
Sullivan School  
Newport, Rhode Island